

IN RECOGNITION OF MAPLEWOOD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AS A 2018
NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. DAVID P. JOYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2018

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Maplewood Elementary School for being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2018. Since 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized public and private schools for academic excellence. This year marks the third time the Maplewood Local School District has been awarded this honorable distinction. Maplewood Elementary School holds high academic standards for each and every student. The Blue Ribbon recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the students, teachers, and administrators of this outstanding school. There is no greater cause than educating the minds of the future. As a father, I know the amount of trust parents put into the hands of our educators. I am proud to have this example of academic excellence in Ohio's 14th Congressional District and I congratulate Maplewood Elementary School on this well-deserved recognition.

CONSTITUENT COMMENTS ON
SOBER LIVING HOME PROBLEMS

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2018

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform my colleagues about the hearing held by the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice on September 28, 2018 on the issue of sober living homes. I had the privilege of testifying at that hearing in support of my bill, H.R. 5724, to restore local oversight over sober living homes. As part of that testimony, I submitted to the Subcommittee letters from many of my constituents about problems with sober living homes caused by current federal law preventing appropriate local oversight. For the benefit of my colleagues and the American people, I include in the RECORD the first group of these constituent letters below:

Generally speaking, Mr. Rohrabacher, you're not someone I feel represents me as a constituent. However, this is one topic I agree with you on, and I never thought I'd say that. I've seen the sober living home industry firsthand. They exploit the desperation of addicts and their families, offer no real help, and when the addict relapses, they are kicked to the curb the same day and don't get prorated their rent money. If they paid for a month and get kicked out 3 days later, they lose all that money. It's actually more profitable for sober livings to have high failure rates because when the next person moves in, they effectively get paid twice for the bed; the forfeited rent and the new person's. The sober living home doesn't concern itself with whether or not the people they evict have somewhere to go. It's not surprising that many end up on the streets. Many sober living homes are poorly maintained, have bug infestations, are overcrowded, and residents regularly experience

theft and violence. If the purpose of a sober living is to give someone a fresh start and chance at redemption, which it should be, then the sober living home industry has failed miserably, and that failure has proven lucrative for those who profit from human suffering. More accountability is needed, addicts are people like everyone else, and deserve better.

STEPHANIE ASHLEY LARCOME,
Westminster, California.

About a year ago my small block of mostly retirees was introduced to "sober living homes". We were also introduced to loss of parking due to various vehicles with out of state plates, frequent local police responses, discarded needles, altercations both verbal and physical and loud music in the wee hours of the morning. Then the non-sober behavior escalated to the overdose and death of 24-year-old Mark Vallas of Chicago on February 24th, 2018. In March 2018, Tim Flinn, the co-owner of New Existence Recovery, which managed the sober living home where Mark Vallas died also overdosed and also died. On July 23rd, four squad cars, a fire truck and ambulance responded to yet another overdose at the same house. Last week a house three houses down from the initial sober living home converted to a sober living home. Last week, police responded to a call regarding the new sober living home. And two days later the Huntington Beach Police Department responded yet again. The current scenario of unregulated and unsupervised residences for addicts is not working. How many more addicts must die as local governments are threatened with lawsuits in an attempt to protect the health and welfare of all? Please take action and support corrective legislation. Thank you.

PATRICIA ANNE QUINTANA,
Huntington Beach, California.

We were the unfortunate neighbors of a sober-living home a few years ago. The occupants were a source of constant nuisance and criminal activity. My children couldn't play outside in our backyard due to the constant, heavy cigarette smoke and loud profanity coming from the residents. These homes don't belong in residential neighborhoods.

ANNE DEBIE,
Costa Mesa, California.

I have lived at this address for 12 years. I have lived in this neighborhood for 27 years. In that time, I have seen cars be broken into at night. If cars are left unlocked, they are ransacked and items taken such as electronic devices. This is routine and typical. Clearly it has increased over the years as more and more people come to the area for treatment and fail. This is a residential neighborhood and not a treatment/medical facility designated area. These homes are not normal by housing multiple adults that would typically have one or two residents in the same space otherwise. We need to stop encouraging such a huge influx of individuals into the community that don't have jobs, family or a productive reason for being here. It creates a huge burden on the city and its residents.

SHEILA CIMINI,
Costa Mesa, California.

I am a physician in Laguna Beach and my area and many others around me are inundated with sober living homes. Unscrupulous property owners are making a fortune housing these individuals, many recruited from out of state. I am sympathetic to these people and their problems, (as I have experienced the pain of addiction in my own family). However, many of these individuals seem largely unsupervised, hang out in

groups around local businesses and our beautiful beaches smoking and making these areas less desirable for children, locals and tourists. Once their coverage ends, (if they have not overdosed in these homes) they are dumped onto the street in my area and continue on as homeless. I very much would like to see out of state addicts stay out of state and the rapacious profits these homeowners make destroying my neighborhood ended.

JAMES RUSSELL, M.D.,
Laguna Beach, California.

A detox/sober living home went in across the street from me over 3 years ago. At the time my boys were 7 and 10. Too young to learn about drugs and inappropriate adult behavior. Since then, there have and continues to be: puking, fighting, patient dumping in front of my house, drugs being delivered to my house, medical supplies in front of my house, intimidation of residents and staff towards my children, we've almost been hit 3 times by staff and delivery persons while in my driveway, ambulances and firetrucks all hours of day and night, my house has been entered 3 times, my car broken into 2 times, my children cannot play out front from the amount of cars, over 20 or more all day and night, drug deliveries on a regular basis including 2 a.m., parking issues, women walking around naked, cars parked with strangers watching my children, blocking of street, residents coming back with knives and kept outside endangering all the neighbors, house not being taken care of and endangering others with hanging roof parts in howling wind, U-turns 24 hours a day aimed at my house, my children and me, parking in front of my driveway blocking my cars, enormous trash with all the vermin that goes with it, blocking of fire hydrant every day, screaming arguing women out front with foul language in front of my children, unknown amounts of addicts visiting residents and house while using my driveway and staring at my children, runaway cars with no drivers, drug dealers approaching me after school with children, men leaving the house through side doors in the middle of the night, volatile women coming and going scaring my children, boyfriends of staff coming and going all hours of the night, the residents have no air conditioning in extreme weather, no backup generator for power outages in cold weather, a regular hole in the front door, broken windows from storms, fire and rattlesnake hazard by not having regular yard maintenance, code violations from the city, drinking. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week businesses that cater to convicted criminals do not belong in residential neighborhoods just doors down from a middle school, a most vulnerable population. Businesses do not belong in neighborhoods at all. We moved here and paid millions to keep our children away from drugs, not to have them enter our house and have us living in fear. Have you ever had someone just walk into your home while you are with your family enjoying your Sunday afternoon or having Sunday dinner to the sound of puking out your front door? The fear that someone can walk into your home on drugs and fully high is paralyzing. Police cannot handle people high on drugs and they are trained and have weapons. Not once, not twice, but 3 times my house has been entered by a drug addict, a very scary staff person and a man trying to deliver dangerous meds in front of my children who would have died if ingested. I was told by the owner that they had insurance for that type of thing. Can you imagine losing your child or having them permanently injured but they have insurance? All in what was a safe neighborhood. No one locked their doors now we spend hundreds on security